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ABSTRACT

Since there are large gaps between the culture, economy, and education of Native Americans and mainstream Americans, the recruitment and training of Native Americans as paraprofessionals in the schools appears to be a promising opportunity to deal with all three gaps simultaneously. Three model programs which are currently bridging these gaps with increasing levels of complexity are: (1) the Rural Indian Education Program sponsored by the Cherokee Nation and the Tulsa Public School District; (2) the Teacher Aide Project sponsored by Oklahoma City University; and (3) the On-site Pueblo Personnel Training Program sponsored by the All Indian Pueblo Council and the University of New Mexico. The Tulsa program recruits and trains parents and other Indian adults as classroom paraprofessionals capable of undertaking very specific tasks. The Oklahoma City program goes beyond such objectives by providing university classes for its paraprofessionals and giving college credits for courses taught on-site throughout the State. The New Mexico program is the most comprehensive of the three in that it is planned to encourage Indian paraprofessionals to complete a sequence of courses leading to an Associate degree and to move on to advanced degrees. In the Pueblo program, most instruction is conducted in the schools in which the aides work. (JC)

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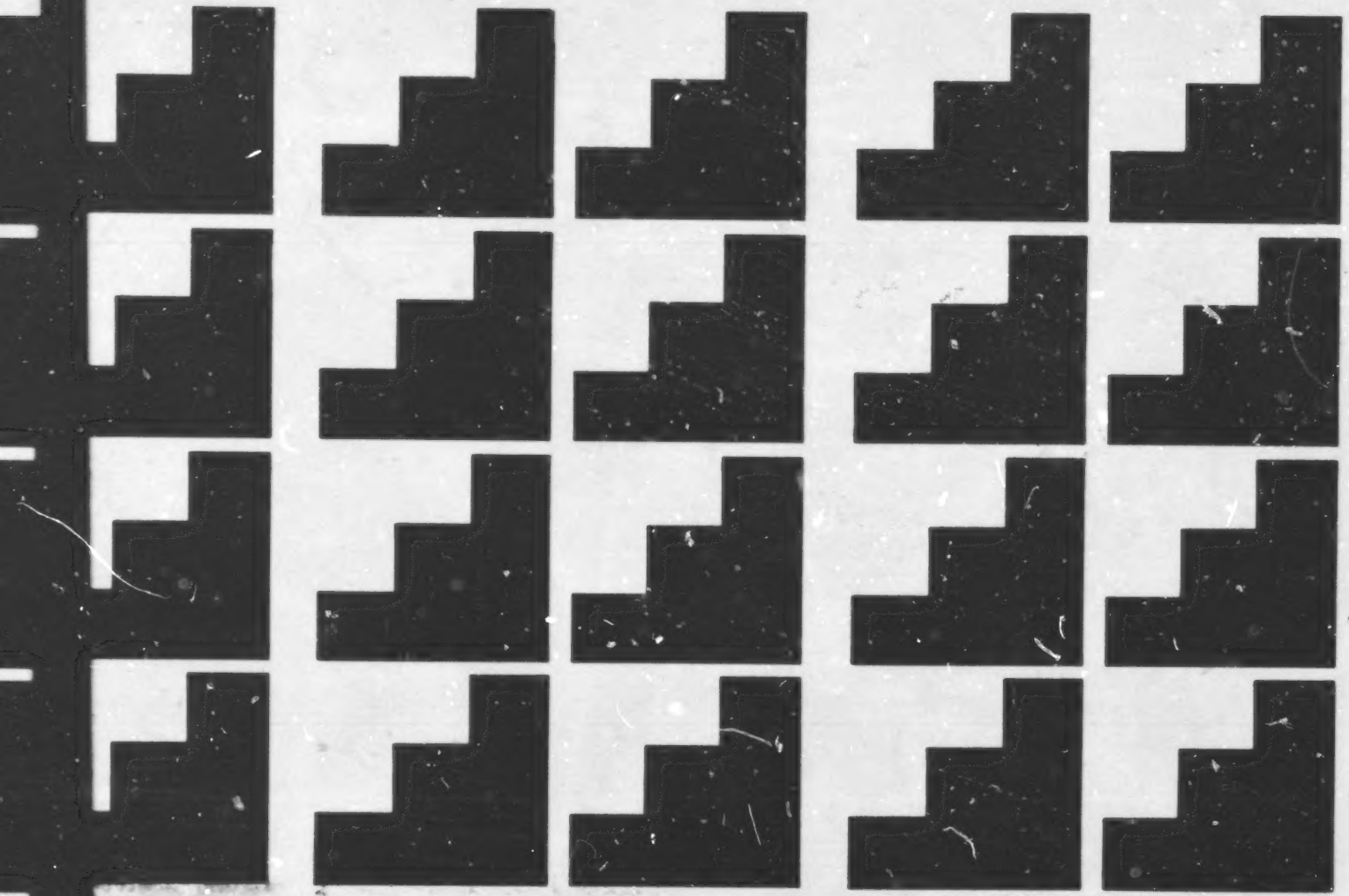



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"Rain People and Planter," painted by Delbridge Honanie.
Tribe: Hopi 70

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# Preface

The Recruitment Leadership and Training Institute (LTI) is a panel which provides technical assistance to projects funded by the U.S. Office of Education under Section 504 of the Education Professions Development Act. One of these projects, the Rural Indian Education Program, sponsored by the Cherokee Nation and the Tulsa Public School District, appeared to panel members who visited it to merit the attention of all those concerned with Indian education. The LTI, therefore, decided to publicize what was happening in Tulsa by producing a film and booklet, utilizing the Tulsa experience and that of two additional programs. The other programs, the Teacher Aide Project sponsored by Oklahoma City University and the On-Site Pueblo Educational Personnel Training Program sponsored by the All-Indian Pueblo Council and the University of New Mexico, although similar in nature, had different emphasis or broader goals. Together the three projects provide a wide range of models for the training of Indian people to teach or to assist in elementary school classrooms.

The three programs are based on the same assumptions: that the quality of education for Native-American children, and the career opportunities for Native-American adults, can be improved by training Native-American paraprofessionals. The involvement of Indian people in the educational process of their own children is desirable and necessary for several reasons: to develop curricula, materials and teaching techniques which reach the Native-American student; to develop a cadre of Native-American educators on all levels of instruction and administration who will foster self-determination, preserve Native-American culture, expand economic oppo
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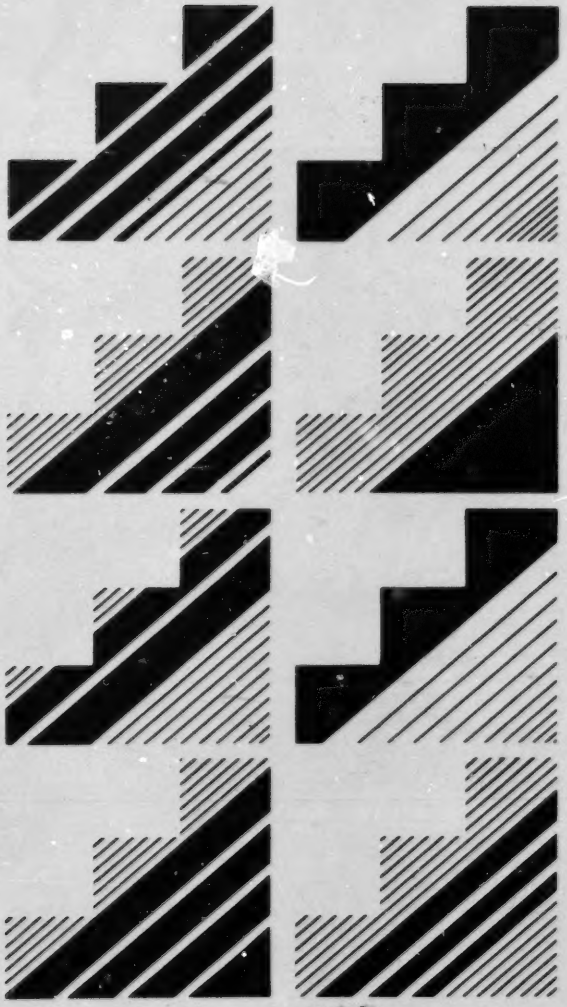
The Recruitment Leadership and Training Institute's 15-minute, 16-mm film "Bridging the Gap: Recruiting Indian People to Careers in Education" is available to local school districts, colleges, universities and Native-American organizations interested in initiating or expanding programs designed to attract and train Indian people to the field of education. Prints of the film are available directly from the National Audio-Visual Center, National Archive and Records Service, General Services Administration, Washington, D.C. 20409.

# Introduction



American Indian people and their problems, at least those of the present day, are far removed from the consciousness of most people in the United States. Only episodes such as the siege at Wounded Knee force recognition of the existence of the Native American. Certainly, there have always been "Anglos" and other non-Indians, who were genuinely concerned about the welfare of Indian people and outraged by treaty-breaking and other dishonorable dealings in which the United States government or individuals engaged. However, probably for the first time, advocates of Native-American rights and students of Native-American culture are beginning to see some results from their efforts to have Indian people viewed objectively and with proper regard for the Native Americans' own perceptions of what constitutes their best interest.

Part of the problem has been the existence of much misinformation about Indian people, and part of the solution surely lies in the dispelling of a number of myths.

The most common, of course, is that "Indians"* are a homogeneous and discrete group. Nothing could be further from the truth. Indian people are not all alike. Far from it. There are at the present time some 250 separate and distinct groups scattered throughout all 50 states. Language and traditions vary tremendously, even among Native-American groups which are geographically rather close. Native-American life styles, points of view, and levels of sophistica-

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Indian people are not "vanishing." At the turn of the century, the Native-American population had fallen from an estimated 850,000 in pre-colonial times to approximately 220,000, but by 1970 it was up to 792,730. The Navajos, for instance, have increased so rapidly over the last one hundred years that overcrowding has long been a serious problem despite reservation lands which comprise an area about the size of the state of West Virginia.

Indian people, for the most part, are not interested in assimilation into the "American way of life," at least insofar as that is characterized by the urban job, the suburban home, the nuclear family and technological affluence. They are proud of their own heritages and traditions, loyal to their tribes, and at home on the land. In the face of many attempts to move them off their lands and into the cities, Indian people have stubbornly retained their identity. They want to remain uniquely Native American; and, for many Indian people, this means remaining on the reservations.

As is well-documented elsewhere, Indian people have been the victims of both private and public policies which refused to accord them the rights as well as the respect and dignity due to all minorities in a democratic system. Even the few non-Indians who respected Native Americans and recognized that injustice, rather than character flaws, had reduced them to poverty

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and general misery were usually committed to the view that assimilation was both desirable and inevitable. To a society devoted to the idea of the great "melting pot," the concept of a unique culture was simply incomprehensible. "Humanitarians," for instance, were the strongest advocates of the 1887 Allotment Act, under the terms of which it was thought that Indian people would be assisted in their progress toward "civilization." And similarly, the termination/relocation program of the 1950's was allegedly intended to encourage Indian people to aspire to new and better jobs in the cities rather than depend on the limited resources of the reservations.

But the fact is, Indian people generally suffer from the consequences of their isolation. Reservation living may and does serve to maintain Native-American tribal identity; however, the limited number of job opportunities on reservations forces many Native Americans to choose between cultural security, on the one hand, and even marginal economic success, on the other. Some are ill-prepared because of the poor educational facilities available to them to make a decent living, on or off the reservations. The vicious cycle of poverty and poor education, which has denied other minority groups the right of participation in the rising standards of living enjoyed by mainstream Americans, is reinforced by language and cultural barriers.

Native Americans rank lowest in every measure of health, wealth, schooling, and achievement. For example:

1.
The average life expectancy of the Native American is estimated anywhere between 44 and 66.5 years. The national figure is 70.4.
2.
Infant mortality is twice the national average. This, coupled with a high birth rate, has resulted in over 50% of all Native Americans being 17 or under. Such a population is very difficult to support.
3.
The average annual income for Native-American families has been estimated at $1,150 for those living on reservations. Other estimates say 63% of Indian families' incomes are not above $6,000. Either way the figure reveals severe poverty levels.
4.
The unemployment rate for Native Americans is 40% with an additional 19% working in temporary or seasonal jobs.
5.
The suicide rate is 21.8 per 100,000 as compared with the national rate of 11.3 per 100,000.*

It is small wonder that enormous cultural, economic and educational gaps have developed between Native Americans and the mainstream of American society. In the past few years, however, there have been many encouraging signs that both Indian people public officials charged their welfare, are develo in turn, new relationshi movement and civil righ did not leave Native-Am touched. Self-determina the rallying point of Ind the nation.

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Indian people have rejected their former status as wards in the protective custody of the state and are demanding the right to determine their own and their children's destiny. Together with concerned and interested educators, they are making some promising attempts to bridge cultural, economic and educational gaps.

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# Gaps between Non-Indian and Native-American Communities

The following pages contain an examination of the three aspects of Native-American life which have felt the impact of the white man's ascendancy in North American culture, economy and education. This report cannot, of course, do more than touch briefly on the historical records of how the "gaps" between Native Americans and other Americans developed, nor does it attempt to identify cause-and-effect relationships in accounting for the state of their existence today. However, some understanding of the close connection between a different culture, inadequate education and poverty may enable the reader to appreciate the significance of projects which prepare Indian people to assume responsibility for the education of their children.



# The Cultural Gap

Native-American culture, varying in detail from tribe to tribe, and handed down through many generations, is very different from that which was imported, chiefly from Europe, by the first colonist or by any of the succeeding immigrants. Most striking, perhaps, is the sense of unity with the natural world which is characteristic of all Native-American religious beliefs and practices. Sun and sky, animals and plants are frequently associated with either deities or guardian spirits, and all of life is thus infused with a sense of the supernatural. Ceremonies, such as sun or rain dances, tie together tribal mythology and the needs of the seasons and are frequently elaborate enough to require the supervision of a specially trained class of priests. Music and dancing, closely associated with tribal religion, are also very different from Western European styles, particularly in that rhythm is more highly developed than melody or harmony. Similarly, arts and crafts, although occasionally purely ornamental, are largely utilitarian as, for example, basket-making, weaving, pottery-making and the like.

The successive waves of European explorers and settlers, and the resulting relocation and dislocation of Native-American life, retarded further development of Native-American culture. Wars, as well as the diseases and alcohol introduced by the white man, took their toll. The inevitable process of acculturation further contributed to the gradual erosion of tribal customs and crafts. In many ways, it is surprising and a tribute to Native-American vitality that any Native Americans have survived as discrete groups. Many, of course, did not.

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For all the criticisms which may be leveled at the policy of restricting Indian people to reservations, it may well be that their culture would have died out completely had policies which promulgated acculturation and amalgamation with the settlers continued unabated. Yet, there is no doubt that confinement of these peoples, whose forms of expression were so strange to European eyes and ears, has not facilitated the narrowing of the gap between Native-American culture and the other forms of American culture. This cultural gap is, in turn, largely responsible for the economic and educational gaps which will be examined in more detail below.



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# The Economic Gap

The economic fortunes of Native Americans have been directly tied to shifting Federal policies regarding Indian people. The 1787 Northwest Ordinance proclaimed the sanctity of Native-American property rights, but these rights soon became meaningless as the growing nation expanded westward. The 1830 Removal Act (under the terms of which lands of Indian people east of the Mississippi were exchanged for others to the west) "solved" the problem only until the 1849 gold rush made the opening of overland routes to California seem far more vital than preservation of Native-American hunting grounds. The late nineteenth century series of battles (with the Sioux and Cheyenne, for instance) was the inevitable consequence of violation of treaty agreements, and the subsequent invasion of Indian territory, slaughter of game and general lack of sensitivity and respect for Indian people.

The gradual restriction of Indian people to relatively small reservations gave rise to a new concern – that they were becoming indolent and ingrown. The 1887 General Allotment or Dawes Act attempted to bring Indian people into the mainstream of American society by dividing reservation lands into small parcels and giving titles to individual Native Americans. Land left over was then declared surplus and opened to homesteaders and prospectors. Since no provision had been made for the next generation of Native Americans, it was not long before there were many Native Americans who had neither land nor any vocational training to provide an alternative to farming. The policy failed to make Indian people independent or to increase the processes of acculturation because no adequate substitute was offered for the support of tribal ties.

By the 1920's, a survey of living conditions of Indian people revealed that most Native Americans were suffering from the effects of poverty, ill-health, lack of education and a dying community life. Beginning in 1934, a number of Federal reforms were undertaken, including the return of some land and the authorization of funds to assist in re-establishing tribal organizations and the founding of schools. An attempt in the 1950's to terminate Federal control over and responsibility for Native-American affairs was itself terminated in 1961, with the appointment of the first anthropologist, Philleo Nash, as U.S. Commissioner for Indian Affairs.

Despite the vast progress made during the last half-century through the development of natural resources in tribal lands, the extension and modernization of agriculture, and the establishment of professional health and educational services, Indian people enjoy a standard of living which is still well below the average American's. Unexpected increases in Native-American population have caused severe overcrowding on some reservations, and access to jobs and job training is not always readily available. Some Indian people have successfully made the transition to city life and employment, but many others still look to their tribe and their reservation as the best hope of economic self-sufficiency.

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As is true anywhere else, however, economic progress is closely related to educational opportunity. It is scarcely worth discussing the development of new industries, business or professions on the reservation without simultaneously considering the nature and quality of the education and training available to Native-American children and youth. As was indicated earlier, cultural differences have been largely responsible for the unique educational difficulties faced by Indian people, and a brief summary of Native-American education is, therefore, essential if we are to understand why and how bridges must be built.

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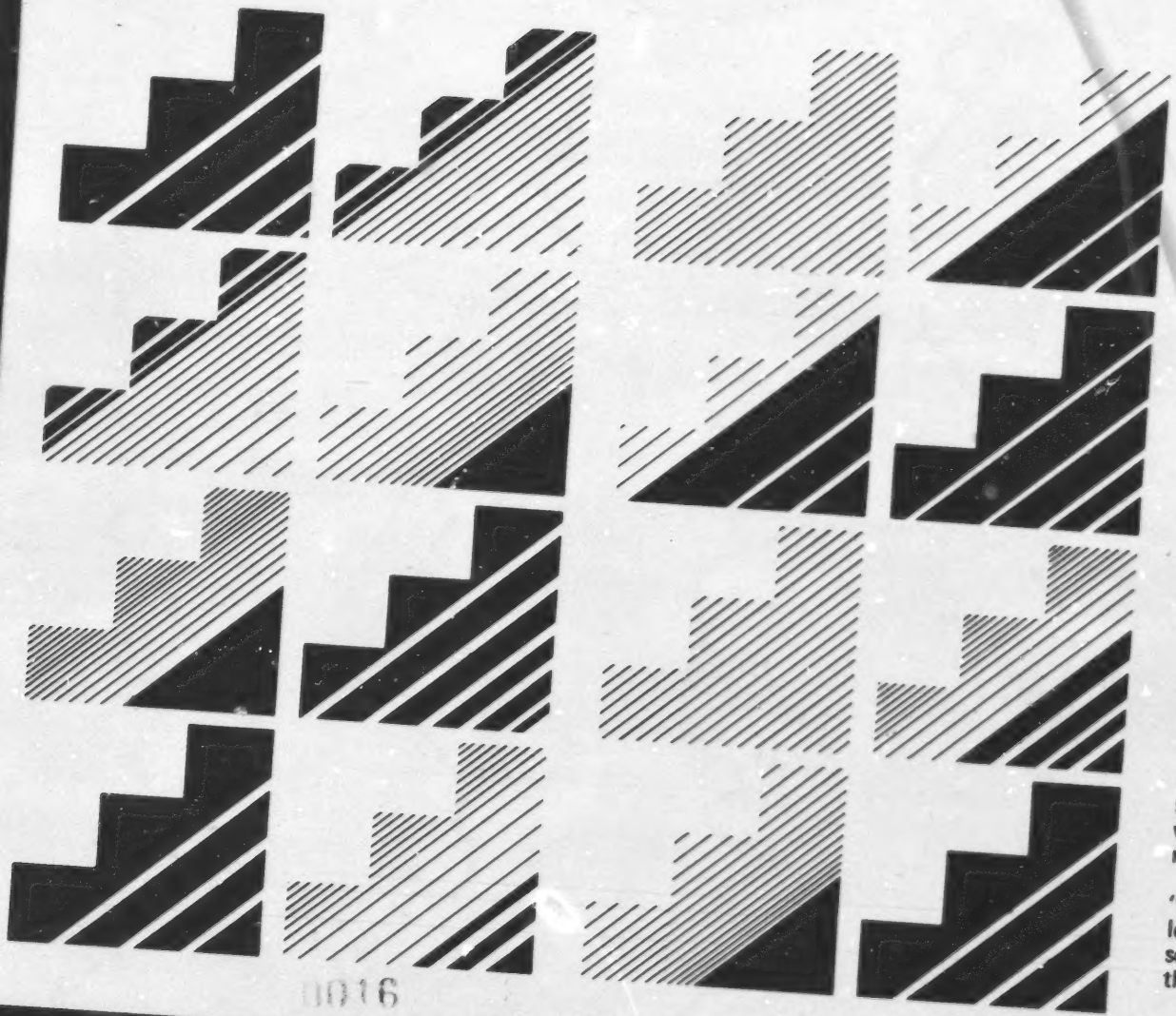

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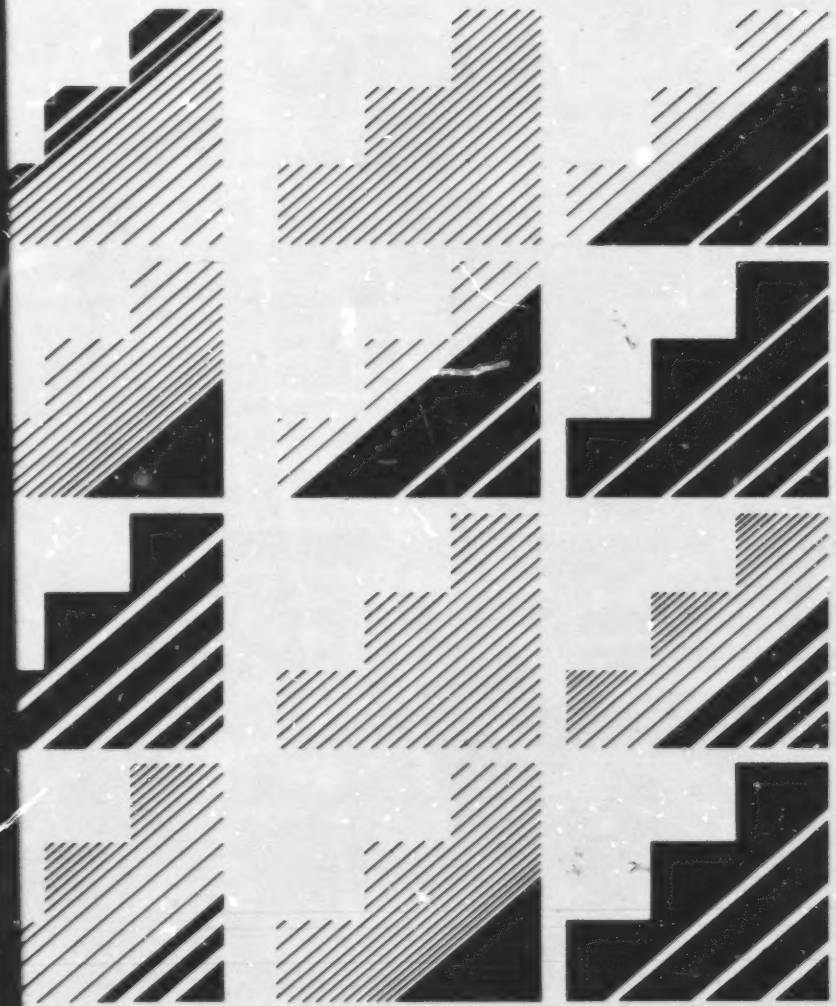

In the past, Native-American educational policy was generally determined by what "experts" in Washington (certainly not Indian people themselves) deemed "good" for them. That all too frequently meant Anglicizing them, getting them off the reservations, and stamping out tribal ties and traditions. Even the most sympathetic educators and others concerned with Native-American welfare were hampered in their efforts by the existence of language and cultural barriers.

One summary of the problems encountered by Native-American children entering Anglo classrooms is given in the Report of the Commission of the Rights, Liberties and Responsibilities of the American Indian:

". . . Indian[s] reared in their own culture may not be ready for public school because they may hold a set of values, standards, and a method of reasoning entirely different from those on which the white educational system was founded. . . .

". . . The relation between the written and spoken word often eludes a youngster since he may have been brought up without any realization that oral sounds have counterparts in symbols on a piece of paper. He may never have seen books, magazines, musical scores, or written numbers before he entered the classroom. . . .

". . . Comprehending the tenses is another problem since the Indian's idea of time is that of something flowing through everything and, like the air, existing in abundance. . . .

". . . Differences in grammar and inflection are also hard for the Indian child to manage. . . .

". . . Another fundamental difference lies in the two attitudes toward nature. . . .

". . . Different behavior patterns of the two cultures further complicates the problem. . . ."*

Imagine the frustration of daily exposure to incomprehensible lessons, to teachers unable to recognize restlessness or hostility as inability to understand what was being demanded, and to the inevitable label of "failure." Some educators, and others supposedly sympathetic to Indian people, believed the problem was the "degrading" influence of the native culture, and felt that the solution might be boarding schools. However, these, too, proved ineffective in many cases and produced more "failures." Native-American teenagers dropped out of these schools because they were unable to cope with homesickness and the continuous pressure to conform to an unfamiliar way of life. It is not really surprising that many Anglos considered Indian people "uneducable," for under such a philosophy and its resultant system of education, that is precisely what they were.

Special United States Senate subcommittee hearings, convened by the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare from 1967 to 1969, known as the "Kennedy Hearings on Indian Education," found that:

1.
Only 1% of Indian children in elementary schools had Indian teachers or principals.
2.
Indian children, more than other minority groups, believed themselves to be "below average" in intelligence.
3.
Dropout rates among Indian children were twice the national average in both public and Federal schools with some school districts having rates approximately 100%.
4.
Achievement levels of Indian children were two to three years below those of white students and Indian children fell progressively further behind the longer they stayed in school.
5.
One-fourth of the elementary and the secondary school teachers surveyed, by their own admission, preferred not to teach Indian children.*

Like members of other groups struggling to attain full participation in American society, many Native Americans understand the critical role played by the educational system in the lives of their children. Indeed, the very hostility to school which used to be interpreted as simply a sign of the Native Americans' low level of intelligence was itself an indication of their quite reasonable response to a system bent on eradicating "Indian-ness."

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*Commission on the Rights, Liberties, and Regulations of the American Indian. *The Indian: America's Unfinished Business*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1969, pp. 142-144.

*Hearings Before the Subcommittee on Indian Education of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, United States Senate, Part 1, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1969, p. 62.

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1.
Only 1% of Indian children in elementary schools had Indian teachers or principals.
2.
Indian children, more than other minority groups, believed themselves to be "below average" in intelligence.
3.
Dropout rates among Indian children were twice the national average in both public and Federal schools with some school districts having rates approximately 100%.
4.
Achievement levels of Indian children were two to three years below those of white students and Indian children fell progressively further behind the longer they stayed in school.
5.
One-fourth of the elementary and the secondary school teachers surveyed, by their own admission, preferred not to teach Indian children.*

Like members of other groups struggling to attain full participation in American society, many Native Americans understand the critical role played by the educational system in the lives of their children. Indeed, the very hostility to school which used to be interpreted as simply a sign of the Native Americans' low level of intelligence was itself an indication of their quite reasonable response to a system bent on eradicating "Indian-ness."

Nowhere are "bridges" needed more than in Native-American schools, where for so long the attempt to close the gap between Native-American isolation and mainstream society has resulted in increasing alienation. The choice presented to Native-American children should not be *either-or*; either learn the white man's way as the only proper life and reject the Native-American way, or vice versa. The choice should be *both-and*; a point of view which holds that it is essential for the school to teach both ways so that Native-American children have a positive sense of identity while learning to live successfully in the modern world.

…nd Regulations of the …*'s Unfinished Business,* …p. 142-144.

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# Training Paraprofessionals to Bridge the Gaps

The cultural, economic and educational difficulties confronting Indian people are so closely intertwined that it is impossible to separate and "solve" one set of problems without considering its impact on the others. However, assuming that development of viable job possibilities on the reservations is of top priority, while improvement of educational opportunities which preserve rather than destroy Native-American culture is equally important, the recruitment and training of Native Americans as paraprofessionals for schools appears to be a most promising opportunity to deal with all three "gaps" simultaneously. In order to understand the importance of this recommendation, it is necessary to discuss briefly the concept of the paraprofessional.

Educational reform movements of the 1960's focused national concern on the disastrous conditions in many schools, both urban and rural. In searching for clues to the nature and origin of the scandalous disparities among American schools, one factor was repeatedly noted. Parents and community residents in middle-class communities (where school achievement was "normal") had considerable influence on or even control over the schools their youngsters attended. School and home were complementary rather than antagonistic forces in the development of young children. In poor and minority school settings, parents were seen rarely if at all. It was, therefore, suggested that if parents and other local citizens in these communities were encouraged to participate in the education of their children, classroom instruction and pupil achievement might improve since "problems" were all too often the consequences of the almost unbearable strain placed on children who had to move from one linguistic or cultural environment at home to a completely different one at school.

Teachers and other school officials who work with children of a culture not their own can and should be trained to understand and appreciate that culture. However, perhaps it is even more important to make room in the school for representatives of the home, community and culture. In low-income and minority communities this can best be achieved by recruiting and training full-time, paid, paraprofessional teacher aides. There are several reasons for this: they can serve as role models for students; they can interpret school requirements not only to children but to parents and, conversely, interpret the home environment to the school staff; they can help teachers determine appropriate pedagogical techniques; and they can realize new career possibilities for themselves. In other words, paraprofessionals can bridge the gap between home and school, a gap which has all too frequently caused failure, despair and smoldering or overt hostility.

The emphasis on "paraprofessionals" should not be taken as a limitation but rather as a beginning point, from which Native Americans who choose to do so can move up the educational career ladder. Since the role of paraprofessional demands the least amount of professional training, it is, therefore, well within the reach of many Native Americans at this very moment. With differentiated and expanded staffing patterns for schools, many Indian people could be offered teaching positions almost immediately on, rather than away from, the reservation. With the hard-won recognitio
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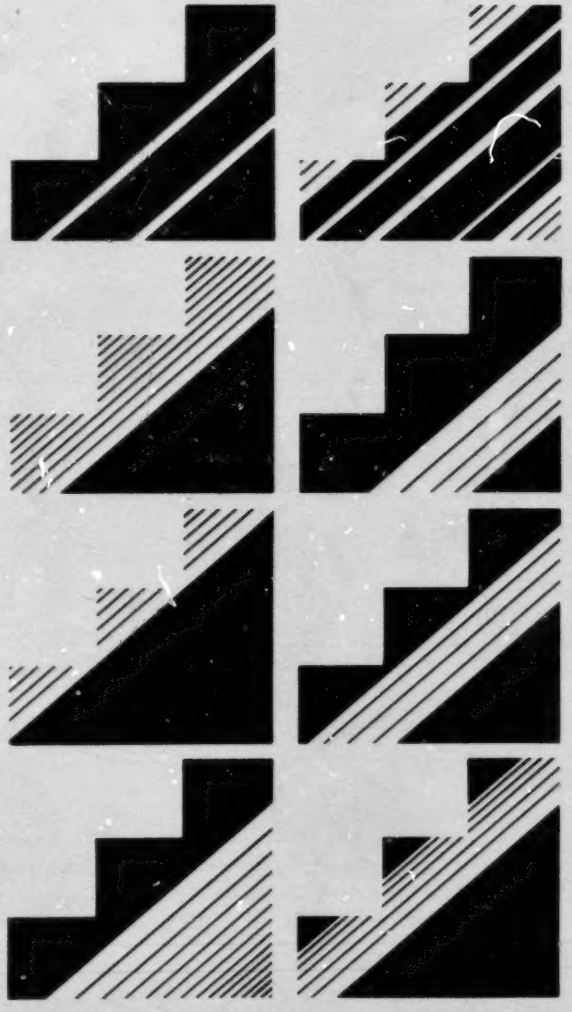
Three programs designed to recruit and train Native-American paraprofessionals for careers in education have been selected for description and discussion in this report: The Rural Indian Education Program of the Cherokee Nation and the Tulsa Public School District, the Teacher Aide Project out of Oklahoma City University, and the On-Site Pueblo Educational Personnel Training Program, sponsored by the All-Indian Pueblo Council and the University of New Mexico.

# The Rural Indian Education Program Sponsored by the Cherokee Nation



Rural schools in four counties of northeastern Oklahoma, the home of the Cherokee Nation, were the beneficiaries of this program, which was established in 1972. Through a grant under an Education Professions Development Act, Section 504A, given to the Tulsa Public Schools, arrangements were made to recruit a number of Native-American adults and to train them as classroom aides for schools in which at least 50% of the student bodies were Cherokee children. From the outset, the program was directed and staffed entirely by members of the Cherokee Nation, all of whom were bilingual.

Although one major goal of this program was simply to ease the young Native American's transition from home to school, by providing familiar and sympathetic adults, the aides were also prepared to offer the youngsters specific educational help. In a pre-school week of training and regular in-service sessions, as well as through informal consultation with professionals, the Native-American aides learned to diagnose motor, auditory and visual problems and to work with the children in remediation activities. Utilizing materials and techniques developed in the Tulsa Schools' "High Challenge Program," the aides assisted teachers to break into the cycle of failure, frustration and academic retardation which has too often characterized the school experience of Native-American children.

Another significant aspect of the program was a series of evening workshops for parents, during which they are given the opportunity to explore their own Cherokee heritage, to improve their skills in native arts and crafts, and to learn ways



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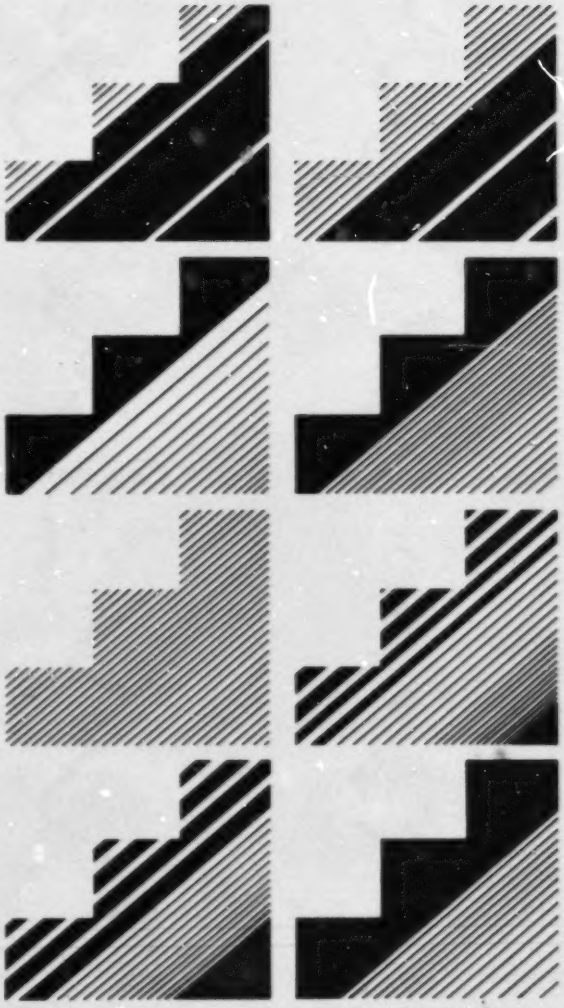
The Rural Indian Education program, relatively small and simple in design, successfully built bridges between the Native-American community and the schools its children attend. Its long-range results remain to be assessed, but there was ample evidence, both tangible and intangible, of what was accomplished: improved test scores and grades, more confident students, increased parent interest in the schools. An important, although only indirectly educational, benefit of the program was the economic assistance it offered, not only through salaries and stipends, but also through the upgrading of native craft skills. In an area where 50% to 70% of the incomes are below the poverty guidelines, and where much work is seasonal in nature, even small financial gains are welcome.

Enthusiasm, dedication, appreciation, pride, commitment — these were characteristic terms used by visitors to this program to describe the staff, the aides, and the parents. Distrust and despair had not, of course, been eradicated, but a promising start had been made. Recognizing and capitalizing upon Native-American strengths, this program made a significant contribution to Cherokee determination to protect their heritage, improve their standard of living, and take control of their own destiny.

Unfortunately, the program did not receive funding beyond June, 1974. However, Mr. Roger Kruse, Director, Federal Projects, Tulsa Public Schools, can be contacted for information.

# The Teacher Aide Project Sponsored by Oklahoma City University



Although Oklahoma has no Indian reservations, it ranks first among the 50 states in Native-American population, and in many of its public schools, Native Americans comprise as much as 50% or more of the student body. With funding provided by the 1934 Johnson-O'Malley Act, which authorizes special assistance to public schools serving Indian people, a considerable number of Native-American teacher aides have been employed to work with kindergarten and elementary children. While most of these aides have the requisite high-school diploma or GED, few, if any, have had the opportunity to undertake specialized professional training or college-level course work.

Recognizing the potential in this large (about 250 throughout the state) group of Native Americans already working as paraprofessional educators, Oklahoma City University's Department of Education has established a special Teacher-Aide Project which has both short- and long-range goals. The immediate objective, of course, is to provide the aides with skills and insights which will increase their usefulness in the classroom. The project is also intended to establish an educational career ladder for Native-American adults and, ultimately, to increase the number of fully certified Native-American teachers.

The project officially began when Native-American aides throughout the state were identified and asked to respond to a survey, indicating what kinds of courses they would find helpful and where they could conveniently attend classes. On the basis of information obtained from the questionnaires, and with the advice of a steering committee of aides, university faculty and staff th
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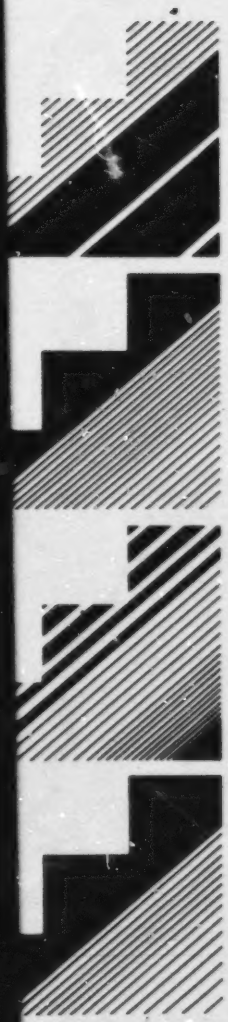

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Four sites were selected and Native-American instructors were hired to teach courses in child psychology, elementary reading and math, children's literature and Oklahoma Indian history. Each course carried two college credits and the cost of tuition was reduced for the aides. Approximately half of the aides eligible for this program enrolled in the first semester's course at one of the four sites, surely adequate evidence of both the need and the appropriateness of the training offered.

Mr. Bud Sahmaunt, Director, Teacher Aide Project, Oklahoma City University, was director of this project and can be contacted for additional information.

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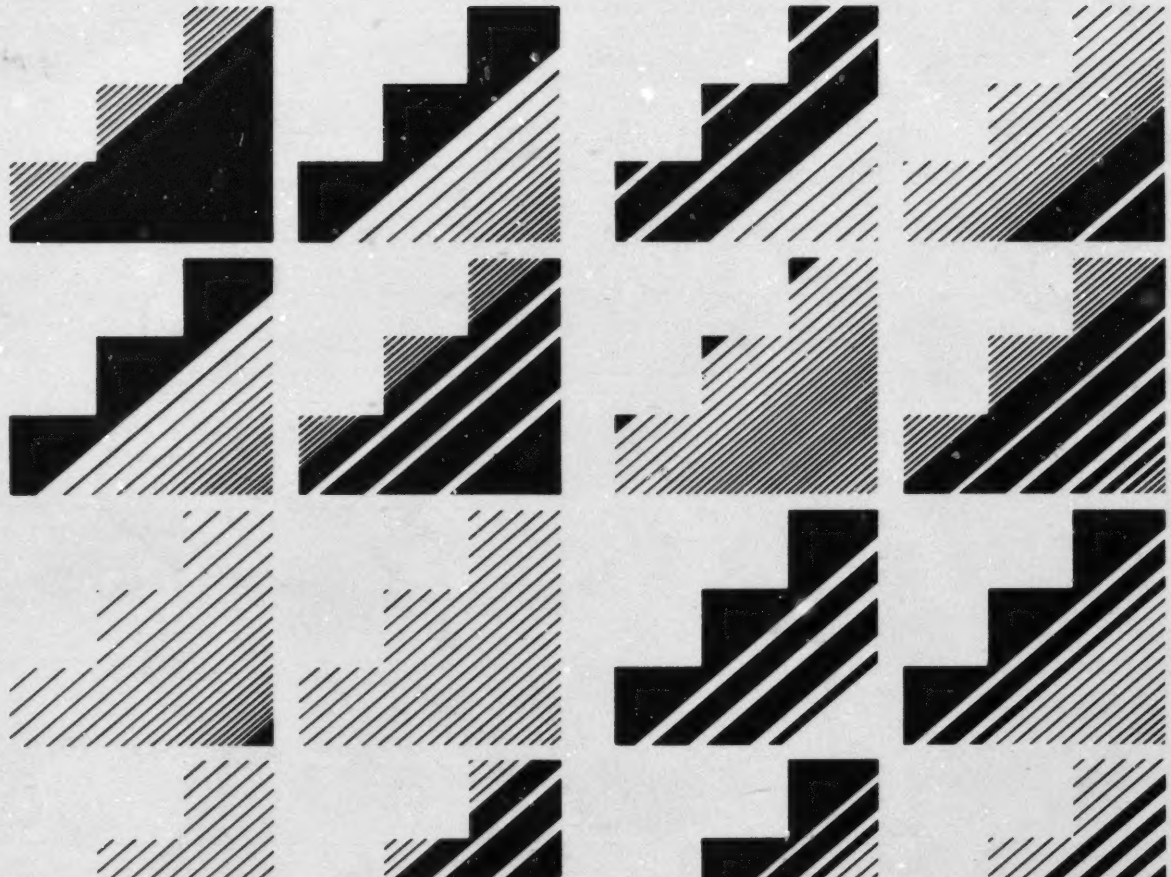

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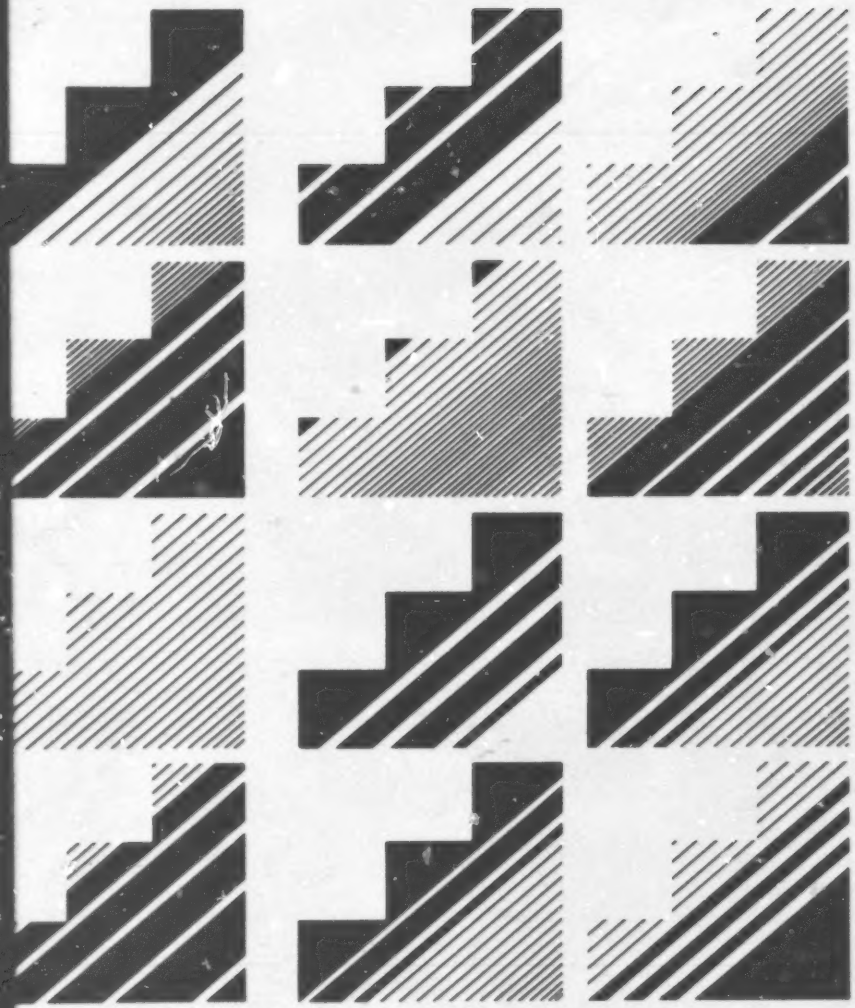
# The On-site Pueblo Educational Personnel Training Program



The most adventurous of the paraprofessional training programs described here is that jointly conceived and sponsored by the All-Indian Pueblo Council and the University of New Mexico. Beginning in 1973, this program has expanded a University of New Mexico concept begun in 1968 to provide on-reservation, experience-based courses which lead to an associate degree and provide continuity to the completion of a baccalaureate degree. The program responds to specific areas of need, depending on the site location, by allowing teacher aides with jobs in the schools to obtain professional education directly related to their work while remaining with their families and communities.

The original proposal was formulated by a twenty-member task force, consisting of local Pueblo Indian representatives and educators from the University of New Mexico. A special Advisory Board is currently responsible for providing direction and monitoring the program on behalf of the nineteen Pueblos. Funding for the program is from varied sources including Title IV, Headstart, Johnson-O'Malley, Title I and the 1972 Indian Education Act, Part B. At present, all nineteen Pueblos are represented among the project participants, and courses are offered at a dozen sites throughout the state.

The entire program is built on the philosophical assumption that there should be a gradual increase in clinical experience in professional education while there is a corresponding decrease in general degree courses which emphasize knowledge acquisition and a firm base from which to develop professional competence.

# Sponsored by the All-Indian Pueblo Council and the University of New Mexico

To a large extent the Department of Elementary Education is moving to incorporate and integrate experience components into the professional development of its students. Among these components are: (1) self, group and cultural awareness, (2) understanding of the teacher role, (3) student growth and development patterns, (4) working directly with children, (5) teacher analysis and feedback, and (6) instructional methodology. In the program, then, components are uniquely grouped together in a systematic way to benefit teacher education students.

An important feature of this project is the emphasis on counseling and record-keeping. Each participant is advised on the appropriate sequence of courses necessary to attain his degree goal, and strenuous efforts are made to keep track of all credits earned (individually or through this project). Throughout, the program endeavors to provide continuous, comprehensive and convenient ways for Indian people to attain full certification as teacher. Only in this way, it is felt, can Pueblo people assume full responsibility for the education of their own children.

Mr. Daniel Hanohni or Dr. Donald Lange, College of Education, University of New Mexico, can be contacted for information on this program.

These three programs have similarities. All share a common concern for "bridging the gap," but there are important differences as well. The Tulsa program recruits and trains parents and other Native-American adults as classroom paraprofessionals capable of undertaking very specific tasks: the diagnosis and remediation of developmental gaps in the motor skills of young Native-American children just entering school. While this program enables its recruits to make invaluable contributions on a level well beyond those activities often associated with classroom aides, such as collecting milk money and helping children with rubber boots, it is limited in focus. The Oklahoma City program goes beyond these objectives by providing university classes for paraprofessionals to train them in a wide variety of classroom teaching skills. College credit is given for the courses, which are taught by Native Americans on sites throughout the state. The New Mexico program is the most comprehensive in that it is planned not only to permit, but to encourage, Indian paraprofessionals to complete a sequence of courses leading to an Associate of Arts degree and, further, to move on to additional course work for a B.A. and teacher certification. In this third program, instruction for the aides is conducted in large part in the schools in which they work.

Underlying all three programs is the basic assumption that it is both feasible and desirable to recruit and train indigenous people for classroom roles. The feasibility is demonstrated at increasing levels of complexity as one moves from the Tulsa project to the Oklahoma City one and finally to that in and around Albuquerque.

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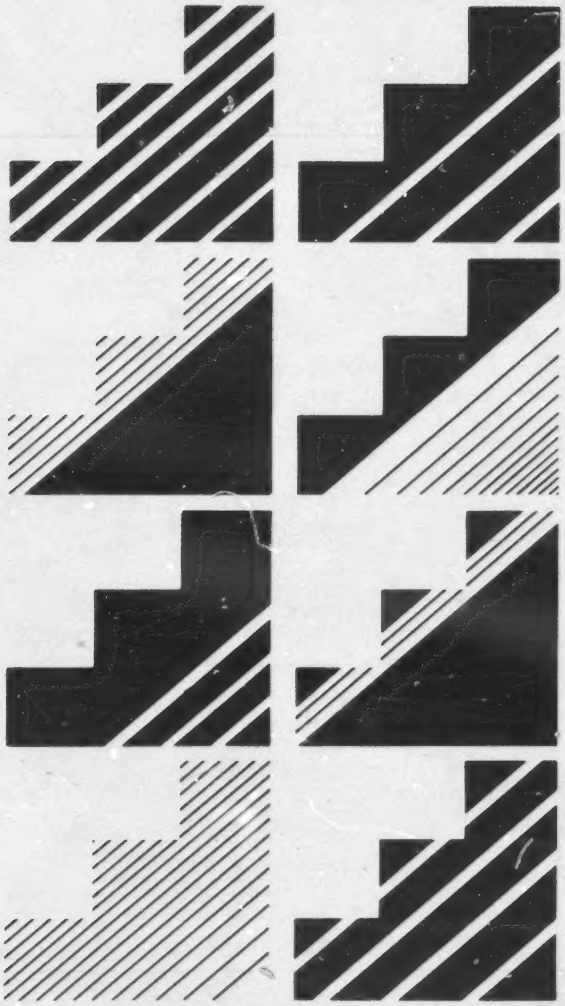
The desirability, while not yet demonstrated by intensive formal research findings, is evidenced by on-site reports from both participants and observers that education for Native-American children is at last becoming a process which builds on the unique Native-American culture while also introducing essential exposure to the modern technological society.

# Recommendations



The three projects which have just been described were selected not only for their intrinsic interest but because they serve as three differing models of how Native-American communities, school districts and universities can co-operate to enhance and improve educational opportunities for Native-Americans, both young and adult. Various funding sources have, among other things, provided schools districts with Native-American paraprofessionals. It is only recently that there have been concerted efforts made to employ their particular abilities, as representatives of the students' native culture, to bridge the home-school gap, to enable them to work more effectively in the classroom as paraprofessional teaching assistants, and, additionally, to encourage them individually to embark on the necessary training to meet certification standards and become professional educators. Clearly, Native-American adults should have a role in educating Native-American children. They should fulfill this role by being educated as fully qualified teacher aides and as certified teachers and as administrators. The benefits are both tangible (e.g., measurable in terms of educational achievement and economic benefit) and intangible.

School districts containing large Native-American populations might consider adopting any one of the three projects outlined above. Local leadership, needs and resources, will determine whether the more specific and limited Tulsa-type project or the much more comprehensive and adventurous New Mexico one, can be undertaken. A district might set as its long-range goal a program to recruit and train Native-American teachers, while beginning with limited training

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Someone, however, must take the initiative. The Recruitment LTI believes that the vision of new bridges to be built should originate with administrators of school districts and teacher-training institutions in communities which have a concentration of Native-American students. It is incumbent upon these educational administrators to gather the information needed and to convene those individuals from the schools and Native-American communities who can co-operatively plan, develop and initiate programs for Native-American paraprofessionals.

The first step involves the gathering of information on Native-American students, paraprofessionals, college and university programs and Native-American organizations. Here is a check list of information that you will need.

1.
How many Native-American students are in the school system?
2.
Which specific schools have high concentrations (25% or more) of Native-American students?
3.
What programs designed especially for Native-American children (e.g. remediation of learning disabilities; appreciation of culture) are presently in operation?
4.
How many Native-American professionals or paraprofessionals are administering or working in these programs?
5.
What funds, earmarked solely or in large part for programs for youth, or for categories of students into which Native Americans fit (e.g., coming from poverty families; low achievers), does the district receive? How are they actually being spent?
6.
How many Native Americans are employed as professionals or paraprofessionals in non-Federal programs by the school district, and in what capacities?
7.
What opportunities does the district provide for Native-American and other paraprofessionals to acquire new skills for use in their jobs?
8.
How many Native Americans are presently enrolled in teacher education programs offered at local colleges or universities?
9.
What specialized classes, counseling or other services do local colleges or universities offer for Native Americans preparing for or now employed in eduational positions?
10.
To what extent are these classes or services provided at sites convenient to where individual Native Americans live or work?
11.
To what extent does the college or university attempt to encourage and enable individual Native-American paraprofessionals to continue their education?
12.
What Native-American organizations or tribal councils are currently functioning in your community?
13.
Does the local school district, college or university have a Native-American advisory council of any kind? How is input from the Native-American community fostered, gathered and utilized?

Once accurate and up-to-date data have been gathered, a meeting should be convened with representatives from the local school district, local colleges and universities and Native-American tribes and organizations. The work of this committee should involve, at the outset, a detailed needs assessment and ultimately a comprehensive program designed to train paraprofessionals and prepare Native Americans for careers in education. The goal of this committee should be the establishment of an educational career ladder for Native Americans which will lead to an increase in the number of qualified, certified Native-American teachers and administrators.





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The Cherokee Nation and the All-Indian Pueblo Council, together with the Tulsa Public School System, Oklahoma City University and the University of New Mexico have demonstrated what can be done. The further history of recruitment of Indian people to careers in education will be written by other school districts, communities and universities which are able and willing to learn from their experiences.

# The Recruitment Leadership and Training Institute

The Recruitment Leadership and Training Institute (LTI) is a panel which provides technical and developmental assistance to projects funded under the Education Professions Development Act, P.L. 90-35, Part A, Section 504, New Careers in Education Program and administered by the Division of Educational Systems Development, U.S. Office of Education.

The activity which is the subject of this report was supported in whole or in part by the U.S. Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred.

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